

Review and Comments on Portions  
of the Narrative Conclusions and Recommendations  
Contained in the IG Survey of the Office of Personnel  
That Relate to Plans and Control/OP  
Functions and Activities

1. Reference: Office of Personnel  
(IG Report Summary - Page 1, para 1)

"The Office of Personnel is one of the Agency's largest organizations though only about two-thirds of its careerists work in the central office itself."

Comment

The Office of Personnel ranks sixth in size out of the eight Offices within the DDA and fifth among the ten Sub-Career Services of the DDA Career Service. Within the 56 Office-level components of the total Agency, the Office of Personnel is 21st in size.

2. Reference: Files on Current and Former Employees  
(Tab A - page A-11, para 19)

"Soft component files on these people could be borrowed. Such files can contain important information not duplicated in official folders." And:

"The Personnel specialist could determine whether unauthorized material is present and whether additional documents in "soft" files should be included in official folders."

Comment

The Office of Personnel is responsible for the control and maintenance of Agency Official Personnel Folders (OPF's) and the inclusion of documentation as prescribed by current Agency policy. "Soft" files on the other hand are instituted at the discretion of component and Career Service managers. The documentary content varies with the decisions of these managers (consistent, of course, with the provisions of Public Law, Executive Orders, and Agency records policies). The content and arrangement for employee reviews of such soft files is a responsibility more appropriately addressed to the component and Career Service officials concerned.

3. Reference: Recommendation No. 1  
(Tab A - page A-12)

"Recommendation No. 1. That the Office of Personnel implement a means by which the condition of active Official Personnel Folders can be assessed in terms of the presence of misfiled or unauthorized documents and the absence of documents that should be included. If widespread serious inadequacies are found to exist, review and correction of all active folders should be undertaken."

Comment

The Office of Personnel has long had procedures for continuous sampling of the Official Personnel Folders to identify the presence of misfiled or unauthorized documents. On the basis of the statements and recommendation of the Inspector General, we will develop and institute appropriate special additional surveys to expand the sampling to determine the presence (and extent) of misfiled or unauthorized documents and the absence of documents that should be included. The Office of Personnel Central File Room receives and files some 112,000 documents in an average year. Under improved procedures instituted in March 1975 and the addition of two part-time employees in January 1976, filing backlogs were eliminated. All documents received in a current week are filed in the OPF prior to the end of the following week.

4. Reference: Agency Personnel Actions  
(Tab B - page B-5, para 9)

"However, Chief, TRB faces a rather continual problem of monitoring errors."

Comment

Chief, TRB was referring to a recent pattern of inaccuracies in researching data required in the preparation of transcripts within her Branch and a relatively high pattern of errors in the Personnel Actions prepared and submitted by Agency components to TRB for inputting to the computer. Actions to remedy these problem areas cited by the Inspectors had been initiated prior to the IG interview. Specifically, a reassignment of an employee was effected with the replacement officer correcting the "transcript" problem and a reduction in errors in component-initiated personnel actions is being realized by conducting retraining sessions for the responsible individuals concerned.

5. Reference: Agency Personnel Actions  
(Tab B - page B-6, para 10)

"The TRB Staff consists almost entirely of low-graded clerks, some of whom are cast-offs from other offices."

Comment:

We believe that the IG's reference to some TRB clerks being "cast offs" from other offices relates to the practice in TRB to augment its limited permanent personnel staff by utilizing personnel from other components of the Agency who are temporarily detailed to the Office of Personnel while awaiting further assignment.

6. Reference: Biographic Profiles and Qualification Files  
(Tab B - pages B-7 through B-10, paras 12 through 19)

Comment:

In general, we are in agreement with the observations of the IG team in reference to the utilization and status of the Biographic Profile and Qualifications File Sections of QAB. There are, however, two inaccuracies concerning the Qualifications Files. One states, "The file is maintained in accordance with criteria established by the Civil Service Commission," (Para 16 page B-9 and para 18 page B-10). The statement is incorrect. The Qualifications System was not developed to meet CSC criteria, but exclusively to meet Agency needs, current and future. The second inaccuracy concerns Project CENQUAL and states, "This program is a subsidiary of PERSIGN II." (Para 19 page B-10). CENQUAL will interface with PERSIGN II but is not a part of it, and our request to OJCS for the CENQUAL program specifically indicated that its completion was in no way to delay or remove resources required to complete PERSIGN II.

In June 1975 a Headquarters Notice was published calling attention to the Agency Personnel Qualifications Records System, and it has brought more requests for its application. It is planned to re-issue the publication in June of 1976.

7. Reference: Recommendation No. 3  
(Tab B - Page B-16)

"Recommendation No. 3. That the Director of Personnel, working with the Director of OJCS, review the priorities for PERSIGN II in terms of manpower assigned and the physical arrangements allotted to staffs."

Comment:

We concur with this recommendation. The DDA has recently established a MAPS Review Committee, "made up of representatives from each of the primary user offices, who are meeting to reaffirm the rela-

priorities of all of the MAPS related projects to assure adequate OJCS manpower coverage on first priority tasks. The number of OJCS personnel reported as "assigned" to PERSIGN tended to create impressions of fuller coverage than was in fact the case. Other priorities imposed on OJCS continuously tended to drain manpower resources from PERSIGN and other related MAPS projects. Maintenance of PERSIGN I, the RCA 501 system and the PERCON program, the enlargement of the data base to permit interface of PERSIGN with CENBAD, CENCO, the PAYROLL system, etc. all have contributed to the staffing problems. The physical work space of the OP staff (i.e., ADRS) analysts had been very poor in the Headquarters location but is much improved in their new location with OJCS in Page Building but still leaves something to be desired in terms of "quiet" areas necessary to further design of specifications for the PERSIGN II system.

8. Reference: Recommendation No. 4  
(Tab B - page B-16)

"Recommendation No. 4. That the Director of Personnel, working with other Offices concerned with the MAPS program, review the elements of PERSIGN II and assign subsidiary priorities to those which do not represent key elements of personnel data urgently needed for managerial decisions or for provisions of personnel services."

Comment:

This is a valid recommendation. Priorities, emphases and regulations have changed over the many years this project has been on the books. Basically, the elements in PERSIGN II are those appearing on the Notification of Personnel Action which conform with Civil Service standards and Payroll system requirements plus a certain amount of Fitness Report and overseas service data for CIARDS. Some items peculiar to the Agency were added, such as PRA, development complement and sub-category data but these are necessary to service reporting requirements levied on the Director of Personnel by Agency regulation to support Heads of Career Services or operating components. Questionnaires were sent to all users of reports several years ago requesting suggestions for changes and additions. Some of the suggested additions were included in the design of PERSIGN II but most were rejected as being too specialized or inapplicable to the Agency as a whole; for example, health problems of wife or children, projected rotational assignments or training special work related skills, etc. It has always been envisioned that PERSIGN II would provide the basic personnel data for subsidiary systems which could be tailored to meet individual Office and Career Service specialized requirements.

9. Reference: Recommendation No. 5  
(Tab B - page B-16)

"Recommendation No. 5. That the Director of Personnel request that the Director, OJCS obtain his concurrence before undertaking personnel-related jobs for other organizations that are likely to impact unfavorably on early completion of PERSIGN II."

Comment:

We concur. There is a mutual understanding that OJCS will not undertake personnel-related projects without the approval of the Director of Personnel but this point should be reemphasized because pressure is building up again for individual mapping tables for all of the offices in the DDO. Many of the Agency's component managers are not fully appreciative of the current state of development of the MAPS systems and the limited resources that OJCS has available to bring up the primary project (PERSIGN II). Diversion of OJCS resources immediately creates slippage in progress toward completion of PERSIGN II.

10. Reference: IG Narrative Statements Regarding the APP  
(Tab B - page B-21, para 37)

"Nevertheless, there is still much misunderstanding of what APP is all about and the publicity given it has been inadequate to the need. Moreover, the Office of Personnel has contributed to poor acceptance of the report through inadequacies in its early presentations of the plan to senior management, with excessively complicated preparation guidelines, belated modifications of instructions and failures to provide adequate briefing to the middle and lower-level line managers who must fill in the forms."

Comment:

We agree that there is a need for a broader and deeper understanding of the APP and its place in the "new approaches" to Agency personnel management as instituted by Mr. Colby in FY 1973. Mr. Colby launched the APP at the Management Committee level and clearly hoped for active support and utilization of the APP as a meaningful personnel management mechanism. Not all senior managers have shared Mr. Colby's enthusiasm for the APP but nonetheless complied with the reporting requirements. By and large, the Directorate APP's have been prepared by Administrative and Personnel Officers assigned to the operating components (i.e., not the line managers). Most complaints relative to the APP pertain to the administrative burden associated with preparation of the reports. In advance of sending out the final FY 1976 APP formats, all Administrative

and Personnel Officers (those who actually fill out the report) were invited to a scheduled briefing at Headquarters Building where three hours were allotted to discuss, review the entire format and be instructed on completion of the APP. At that meeting all attendees were advised that members of the OP Review Staff would be available to meet with Career Service or Subgroup personnel separately to further explain the philosophy and techniques of the APP. In light of some complaints of directions being insufficient in FY 1975, the instructions for the FY 1976 APP were spelled out in greater detail than in prior years. Subsequently only the DDI and DDA Career Services requested meetings of their representatives with the OP Review Staff for further discussion and guidance.

The Review Staff is presently working with representatives at the Directorate level in an effort to modify the substantive content, simplify the format of the APP for the coming Fiscal Year, and improve the instructions on the use and preparation of the reports.

11. Reference: IG Narrative Statements Regarding the APP  
(Tab B - page B-22, para 39)

"We found the detailed analysis done on the current APP for the Director unnecessarily prolix and complicated."

Comment:

The analysis referred to was developed by the Review Staff at the request of the DCI for his use in discussions with the Deputy Directors.

12. Reference: IG Narrative Statements Regarding the APP  
(Tab B - page B-22, para 39)

"Moreover, we perceive a view of line management, in our discussions with Chief, Review Staff, that is not conducive to solving the communication problem--namely, her view that line managers are unnecessarily sloppy, lack logic, and indifference, all of which works against the program's success."

Comment:

Apparently the Investigator misunderstood the Chief, Review Staff's comments. The individuals referred to were not the line managers but the staff personnel (in some cases clerical level) who prepared the data on the APP submissions. A review of the APP's as initially submitted revealed an extensive number of obvious errors and omissions that required correction by the Review Staff prior to their submission to the DCI.

- 13, Reference: IG Narrative Statements Regarding the APP  
(Tab B - page B-22, para 39)

"We think a more positive approach to the communications problems would come from a recognition that line managers are often overworked and beset with a plethora of current deadlines. They are best prepared for innovation if it is made quite clear how it will help make their activity become more effective (and easier to manage)."

Comment:

The Report expressed concern for the line manager being unduly involved in complicated and detailed OP oriented projects that he or she could not identify as being relevant to their situation. This would indeed be a concern if that were intended to be a part of APP. The APP however, is not designed to function that way. At best the line manager will have physical input to only one-third of the report, granted that input should be based on analysis of the other two thirds, but the statistical work for that analysis should already have been done. In fact much if not all of the analysis should have been done. It is even probable that "line managers," managers below the Office and Division Head level, will have no input to the APP at all. The input should be done by the senior personnel and administrative officer with the close direction, complete knowledge and approval of the Office or Division Head at those levels and the Deputy Directors knowledge and approval at that level.

The goals and directions set forth in the APP are Office and Division goals and directions and are approved or amended as they support or conflict with Career Service goals and directions. The APP is not intended to be a working document that would help the line manager solve his daily working problems. It is not designed to solve any day by day problems except as they relate to the broad picture of personnel management. The APP is a yearly planning paper which, if followed, assures adequate and properly distributed headroom for promotion; a well-planned mix of clerical, technical and professional employees; continued and proper use of rotational assignments; a minimum number of PRAs; adequate training etc.

Granted there are communication problems associated with the APP, however, we feel the most serious problems are not between line managers and the Office of Personnel. The lines of communication that need strengthening are as follows:

- OP with DDs.
- OP with Subgroup and Division Heads.
- OP with senior Personnel Officers in Subgroups, Divisions and Career Services.

DDs with Subgroup and Division Heads,  
DDs with Career Service Chiefs of Personnel and  
Admin Officers,  
Subgroup and Division Heads with their senior Personnel  
and Admin Officers,  
Subgroup and Division Heads with the line managers.

The IG Report is obviously correct in stating that the APP and to a lesser degree the PDP have not been fully accepted in the Agency. In discussing these topics with Agency personnel members of the Review Staff find three major causes for the complaints:

- a. Misunderstanding the report by thinking it is only for the purposes of the Office of Personnel,
- b. Understanding the intent and purposes of the report but failing to get Office and Career Service input or interest in the reports,
- c. Receiving no feedback below the Deputy Director level regarding submissions.

The reports do create many aggravations among those who prepare them. The aggravations vary from office to office but one central theme is the complexity of the APP. We agree with the IG investigators that the APP is not as complicated as many make it out to be. We have found that many of the problems are caused directly by failure to relate data on one page to the substance of another and failure to copy numbers correctly. However, the FY 77 APP is being restructured to reduce the reporting requirements.

We fully agree that continued communication on the purpose of the APP and PDP is needed - with the hope that the repetitive approach will bring about the second step which makes communication - the party of the second part listens, comprehends and acts. As an example, the guidances for the APP every year have suggested that the Career Service analyze their own APPs for purposes of Subgroup comprehension and feedback. The Review Staff has even prepared the Subgroup comparative charts for the Directorates. To our knowledge nothing was ever done with the material (except in the DDI in FY 76) even, insofar as we could ascertain, to the Deputy Director not sending the Agency report to his own senior personnel managers.

It is pertinent in this reply to the IG investigators, to note that the APP analysis on an Agency-wide basis had lead to a number of personnel management improvements, or attempts to improve, but unfortunately with attribution to APP data base - perhaps another lack of communication in that the action officers don't relate the two activities or sets of facts.

- 14, Reference: Customer Perceptions of Agency Personnel  
Policy Development  
(Tab H - page H-1, para 2)

"Initiatives in personnel management are often taken in CIA by people other than the Director of Personnel. An outstanding example are those inspired by the then DCI that led, through recommendations of a Personnel Advisory Study Group (PASG) report, to an effort still underway called "New Approaches to Personnel Management."

Comment:

The Personnel Approaches Study Group (PASG) was the result of a suggestion made by the Director of Personnel to prevent a fragmented approach to changing the personnel management system in the Agency. The Office of Personnel was already involved in a low-key study to make some needed changes. The backing of top management, especially Mr. Colby, resulted in a much more comprehensive revamping than would have been possible otherwise.

During late 1972 and early 1973 the Office of Personnel was actively involved in reviewing current personnel management policies and procedures in the Agency. Staff proposals were written on fitness reports, employee mobility, executive development, counseling, etc. Mr. Colby, then Executive Director-Comptroller, was sounded out on some of these proposals and was most encouraging in his support. He made it clear that he had a personal interest in personnel management and would be receptive to other proposals on needed changes.

About the same time, others were taking a look at some of the same problems and submitting reports to the Director:

MAG, "Career Services: Need for Change" (7 May 73)

IG, "Agency Career Services" (Apr 73)

[REDACTED] "Personnel Management in CIA" (13 Mar 73)

On 1 June 1973 the CIA Management Committee met and spent almost the entire meeting discussing personnel management issues raised by these papers. The Director of Personnel advised the Committee that the points raised should not be considered independently of other aspects of personnel management and that he should be allowed to develop an integrated approach. The Committee agreed and directed the Director of Personnel to set up a study group to make specific recommendations on changes in the personnel management system.

Each Deputy Director appointed a representative to the study group and it became known as the Personnel Approaches Study Group (PASG). The Office of Personnel/Plans Staff provided the staff support for the PASG Report and has continued to work with the Directorates in implementing the new approaches.

15. Reference: Customer Perceptions of Agency Personnel Policy  
Development  
(Tab II - page II-4, para 7)

"(The Careers Committee will meet periodically) . . . to assign study projects. The first such are directed at realizing the PASG objective of more inter-Directorate transfers as well as providing better job counselling and career guidance."

Comment:

The Careers Committee was established for the primary purpose of serving as a mechanism to facilitate the exchange of information among Career Services. Career Service Heads were not given to understand that the Committee would be working on career patterns that would involve inter-Directorate personnel movements. It can be said that the Committee intends to promote greater willingness among Agency managers to consider and recognize the transferrability of skills between more occupational groups than is the case at the moment. The Committee through this approach of studying and analyzing the facts of movements of personnel between occupational groups expects to broaden the career prospects for those able employees caught by lack of growth opportunity in their own component. Developmental Profiles prepared as part of a PDP requirement serve as reference and point of discussion in searching out and addressing various career management issues. Likewise, the role and responsibilities of Agency career counselors will be an area of focus for the Committee. No doubt one of the unannounced objectives of the Committee is to do what it can to minimize the bias which currently impedes intra-Agency personnel movements of talented and valuable employees.